

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I want to join with the gentlewoman from Oregon [Ms. HOOLEY] in expressing sympathy for the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PASCRELL] on the death of the gentleman's father.

Mr. Speaker, Democrats are determined to bring campaign finance reform to the floor, despite the Republican leadership's reluctance to do so. The problem with congressional elections is that they cost too much, and increasingly the average American cannot run for Congress. The public feels that their vote does not count because of the influence wealthy people have through their ability to contribute large sums of money to a campaign.

My home State of New Jersey sets a very good example of a public financing system that we use for our Governor's race that is going on now. Contributions to the Governor's race, I should mention, are limited. But more important, the amount of private money is capped and then matched with public funds, so that the overall expenditures of the race remain basically even for Democrat and Republican candidates.

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I would like to see the same type of system for congressional raises. I believe the public would support this as an alternative to the current race for dollars. Democrats, Mr. Speaker, will continue to press for campaign finance reform.

#### NATIONAL EDUCATION STANDARDS

(Mr. TIAHRT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I was saddened several months ago when I heard the President abandon the teachers in America. He called for 1 million volunteers to teach our children to read.

In Kansas, the teachers have not abandoned our children. They are teaching reading and writing and math and history and science and other important things. They have not turned from their job responsibility, even if the President has turned his back on them.

Now the President wants to create more government and establish national education standards. Sounds good. I am from the government and I am here to help. But we have done that before. We have national standards. It is for Pentagon procurement. We call them MILSPECS. They are very complicated. Because of those MILSPECS, we bought a \$750 pair of pliers.

Now they want to transfer that technology to education. Let us not go there. The States have that responsibility and States like Kansas have established quality performance accreditation educational standards. Kansas has not abandoned educational stand-

ards. Let us not complicate education standards and get the equivalent of a \$750 pair of pliers. Let the States do their job.

#### FAST TRACK TRADE AUTHORITY

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, stating that exports to Mexico have increased, the President now wants fast track for all of Latin America. In a way that is true.

Check this out. Last month, Fruit of the Loom cut 2,400 jobs in Louisiana, citing no regulations and cheaper labor. As a result, Fruit of the Loom is exporting factories and machinery overseas. This is out of control, Mr. Speaker.

First, the President donates his boxer shorts to charity, then literally takes the tax deduction for it. Now the President wants to donate our BVDs, Mr. Speaker, and give us a training voucher for a job in Latin America.

Beam me up. This is not fast tracking. This is backtracking. I yield back the Constitution that mandates a two-thirds ratification vote of the U.S. Senate to enact a treaty, if anybody abides by the Constitution around here.

#### SCHOOL CHOICE

(Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, for America's poorest children education is their most direct path out of poverty. In fact, even children in truly horrible schools manage to escape destitution by dint of relentless determination and honest hard work. But children should not have to pass through metal detectors on the way through the schoolhouse door. If kids are more consumed by the fear of violence than the hope of earning an A on the next exam, the great challenges they face become even greater.

Confronted by school violence and disorderly classrooms, to whom can these children turn? I believe they ought to turn to their parents, of course. But what if their parents lack the freedom to pull their children out of harmful schools? While the status quo interests join together to say "too bad" or join together in offering more hollow promises, Republicans offer America's children hope in the form of school choice and education savings accounts.

Hope is too scarce a commodity to most of our Nation's poorest communities. School choice and education savings accounts level the playing field and offer hope by treating families like real customers and children like real Americans.

#### CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

(Mr. SNYDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SNYDER. Mr. Speaker, on June 11, 1995, in a very famous photo, the Speaker of the House and the President of the United States shook hands and committed themselves to campaign finance reform. Over 2 years later, we have had over 85 bills introduced and none passed. Why is that? Because it is a tough issue. It is a very difficult issue that not only divides parties but divides us among our own parties.

I encourage the membership to take a look at H.R. 2183, the freshman bill. It is bipartisan. It does the doable. It stops the large donations from unions, corporations, and wealthy individuals, those huge soft money donations that threaten our system.

H.R. 2183, I believe, takes a step in the right direction, not a bill for all time but it is a good, important first step.

#### NUCLEAR WASTE POLICY ACT

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, the rhetoric surrounding H.R. 1270, the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1997, is often technical and rarely illustrative in a personal manner, where the impact will be the greatest. Many American cities around this country are going to be affected by this act. Typical American cities such as St. Louis, MO, will become nuclear refuse hubs as radioactive waste is transported and funneled from subsidized nuclear powerplants through St. Louis to the proposed nuclear storage site in Nevada. Residents of St. Louis should know that this waste will travel along Interstate 70, next to North Memorial Drive and the Mississippi River, meaning that if an accident were to occur and a small fraction of the shipping cask's contents were released, it would be sufficient to contaminate a 42-mile square area that would take 460 days to clean up. This would devastate downtown St. Louis, endanger the people living there, contaminate the Mississippi River, threaten every city and person downstream.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues were sent to Congress to serve and protect their constituents, not mandate a physical, environmental, and economic disaster upon them.

#### BIPARTISAN CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

(Mr. ALLEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, campaign finance reform does not have to be a partisan affair. It can be a bipartisan